

Messiah

June 29, 2014

Ps 91:14 "Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name.

I. Definition of Messiah

A. Old Testament

The term "Messiah" means the "anointed."

"Messiah" is a Hebrew word (Mashiyach) for anointed; and is translated as anoint, anointed and anointing (the numbers below represent the number given to this word by Strong's Concordance).

anointed 4899 = used 39X in OT.

anoint 4886 = used 69X in OT.

anointing 4888 = used 26X in OT.

In Jewish thought, the Messiah would be the king of the Jews, a political leader who would defeat their enemies and bring in a golden era of peace and prosperity.

B. New Testament

The word "Christ" is a Greek word (Christos), meaning "anointed."

The title "Christ" in the New Testament has this same meaning of the Hebrew word "Messiah" in the Old Testament.

The title "Christ" occurs about 530 times in the New Testament.

Jesus is called either the Messiah (anointed), or the Christ (anointed), meaning the same thing.

The Jews speak of the Messiah; Christians speak of him as the Christ.

C. Jesus Christ

Many say the name Jesus Christ without realizing that the title means Jesus "the Anointed One." The Greek word is Christos, which is a translation of the Hebrew word, Messiah.

Jn 1:41 He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).

Both terms come from verbs meaning "to anoint with sacred oil"; hence, as titles they mean "The Anointed One."

In Christian thought, the term Messiah refers to Jesus' role as a spiritual deliverer, setting His people free from sin and death.

D. Anointed

In Old Testament times, when someone was set apart to their ministry, they were anointed with oil; this ritual was the commissioning of a person for a special task, anointing him with oil.

To anoint, therefore, means often the same as to consecrate, or to set apart to an office.

Those thus set apart are said to be anointed (the "anointed" one), or to be the anointed of God.

II. Anointed positions & people

In Old Testament times special persons selected to serve God and the nation were set apart for their mission by being anointed with olive oil. All of them were anointed with oil, which was the symbol that God had specifically chosen them for their respective offices.

Messiah (anointed) is used more than 30 times to describe:

A. Kings -

Israel's kings were anointed when they were commissioned to the royal office (Lev 4:3; 6:20; Ex 28:41; 29:7; Judg 9:8; 1 Sa 9:16; 15:1; 16:12; 2 Sa 23:1)

David calls Saul "the Lord's anointed" (1 Sa 24:6,10; 2 Sa 1:14-16)

B. Priests -

Aaron and his sons were anointed when they were consecrated as Israel's priests (Ex. 28:41; 29:7; Lev 4:3, 5, 16)

C. Prophets -

1 Ki 19:15-16 Elijah anoints Hazael and Jehu as kings, and Elisha as prophet in his place.

Ps 105:15 "Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm." (speaking of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph & Moses)

D. Cyrus - the Persian King

Isa 45:1 Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed, ...

E. David - The word is also used in connection with King David

(who became the model [type] of the messianic king; 2 Sa 22:51; Ps 2:2)

III. Jesus is the Messiah = the Anointed One

In predicting the appearance of a person to be called the "Messiah," the Old Testament practice of anointing foreshadowed His role.

A. Messiah as a title for God

Daniel announces the Messiah (Dan 9:24-27).

Dan 9:25 "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks ...

This prophecy blends the priestly and kingly aspects of the Messiah's ministry, and also gives the divine title, "the Most Holy" to the Messiah.

Dan 9:24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy"

Daniel's prediction concerning the Messiah is not the only place where His deity is affirmed. Ps 2 is recognized by ancient Jewish commentators as well as by Christians as a messianic psalm;

Ps 2:1-3 speaks of the "nations" raging against "the Lord and... His Anointed".

Ps 2:7-9, 11-12 the Messiah (His Anointed) is seen in His royal role as Conqueror, and as the Son of God.

B. Messiah is God

The Scriptures presenting the Messiah (the Christ) as the Anointed One clearly establish the fact that the Person who will come to deal with sin and establish His righteous rule is indeed God Himself.

The promised Messiah (Anointed One) would be anointed by God's Spirit

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; ...

Lk 4:16-21 Jesus read (Isa 61:1-2) and declares "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Jn 3:34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure.

C. The Messiah would be Prophet, Priest and King.

He would be anointed by God's Spirit to be the ultimate Prophet, Priest, and King.

1. Prophet - He would represent the people before God (like Moses), He would speak to them all that God said, and deliver them from their enemies.

Dt 18:18 I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him (see Dt 18:15-20).

The Old Testament closes with the promise of Elijah the prophet

Mal 4:5-6 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse."

John the Baptist is asked if he is the prophet (John 1:19-28)

Jn 1:21 They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

Jn 1:25 They asked him, and said to him, "Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

Philip tells Nathaniel that Jesus is the promised prophet Moses wrote about.

Jn 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Peter's second sermon declares that Jesus is the promised prophet (Ac 3:19-26).

The Prophet like Moses

Ac 3:21-22 whom (Jesus) heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. 22 "Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN;

The Seed of Abraham

Ac 3:25 ...saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.'

Stephen also reminds them of the promised prophet spoken by Moses (Ac 7:37).

2. Priest, He would represent the people before God and offer a sacrifice that restored harmony between people and God.

3. King, the Messiah would conquer evil, punish sinners, and establish God's rule on earth.

These ministries, the prophetic, the priestly and the kingly, are reflected in the names and titles given to the Messiah in the Old Testament. These names and titles also establish another important truth. The coming Messiah, while a human being, was to be God Himself.

IV. Messiah - New Testament title

The title "Christ" (Messiah) occurs about 530 times in the New Testament, it is used in combination with other titles:

A. His Name

1. His birth name was Jesus, "Jesus Christ" (used 131)

(Mt 1:1, 18; Mk 1:1; Jn 1:17; 17:3; Ac 2:38; 3:6; 4:10; 8:12; 9:34; 10:36, 48; 11:17; 15:26; 16:18; 28:31; Rom 1:4, 6, 7, 8; 2:16; 3:22; 5:1, 11, 15, 17, 21; 7:25; 13:14; 15:6, 30; 16:25, 27; 1 Cor 1:3, 8, 9, 10; 2:2; 3:11; 6:11; 8:6; 15:57; 2 Cor 1:2, 3, 19; 4:5; 8:9; 13:14; Gal 1:1, 3, 12; 2:16; 3:1, 22; 6:14, 18; Eph 1:2, 3, 5, 17; 5:20; 6:23, 24; Phil 1:2, 19; 2:11, 21; 3:20; 4:23; Col 1:3; 1 Thes 1:1, 3; 5:9, 23, 28; 2 Thes 1:1, 2, 12; 2:1, 14, 16; 3:6, 12, 18; 1 Tim 6:3, 14; 2 Tim 2:8; Tit 1:1; 2:13; 3:6; Phm 3, 6; Heb 10:10; 13:8, 21; Jas 1:1; 2:1; 1 Pt 1:1, 2, 3, 3, 7, 13; 2:5; 3:21; 4:11; 2 Pt 1:1, 1, 8, 11, 14, 16; 2:20; 3:18; 1 Jn 1:3; 3:16, 23; 4:2; 5:20; 2 Jn 3, 7; Jude 1, 1, 4, 17, 21, 25; Rev 1:1, 2, 5)

2. "Christ Jesus" (used 91X)

(Ac 24:24; Rom 1:1; 2:16; 3:24; 6:3, 11, 23; 8:1, 2, 34, 39; 15:5, 16, 17; 16:3; 1 Cor 1:2, 4, 30; 4:15; 15:31; 16:24; 2 Cor 1:1, 19; 4:5; Gal 2:4, 16, 16; 3:14, 26, 28; 4:14; 5:6, 24; Eph 1:1, 1; 2:6, 7, 10, 13, 20; 3:1, 6, 11, 21; Phil 1:1, 1, 6, 8, 26; 2:5, 21; 3:3, 8, 12, 14; 4:7, 19, 21; Col 1:4; 2:6; 1 Thes 2:14; 5:18; 1 Tim 1:1, 2, 12, 14, 15; 2:5; 3:13; 4:6; 5:21; 6:13; 2 Tim 1:1, 1, 2, 9, 10, 13; 2:1, 3, 10; 3:12, 15; 4:1; Tit 1:4; 2:13; Phm 1, 9, 23)

3. With the article "the Christ" (used 47X)

(Mt 16:16, 20; 22:42; 24:5, 23; 26:63; Mk 8:29; 12:35; 13:21; 14:61; Lk 3:15; 4:41; 9:20; 20:41; 22:67; 23:35, 39; 24:26, 46; Jn 1:20, 25; 3:28; 4:29; 7:26, 27, 31, 41, 41, 42; 10:24; 11:27; 12:34; 20:31; Ac 2:31; 3:20; 5:42; 9:22; 17:3, 3; 18:5, 28; 26:23; Rom 9:5; 2 Cor 13:3; Heb 6:1; 1 Jn 2:22; 5:1)

4. With another title "Lord Christ" (used 2X)

(Ro 16:18; Col 3:24)

5. Christ is also used alone as the one favored substitute name or title for Jesus.

Paul used the title more than any other writer (about 380 times). Since Paul used this title so profusely in his letters, it stands to reason that "Christ" was a very popular title for Jesus in the early years of the church. Here are a few examples:

Ro 5:6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

Ro 5:8 ... while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Ro 8:35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ ?

Gal 1:7 ...there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

Gal 3:16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

Gal 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ .

The believers in the early church confessed their belief that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah of the Old Testament by calling Him the Christ.

B. Jesus accepted the title and role of “Christ the Messiah.”

At His baptism by John, Jesus received the outpouring of the Spirit and God’s mandate to begin His ministry (Mt 3:16-17). Jesus’ baptism should be understood as His anointing to the threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King.

John himself denied being the anointed one and identified Jesus as “the Christ”

Jn 1:20 And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, " I am not the Christ." (Lk 3:15-16)

Jesus’ first disciples followed Him because they knew He was the Messiah.

Jn 1:41 He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah."

The confession of the disciples voiced by Peter was approved by Jesus as a divine revelation:

Mt 16:16 “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Further proof of Jesus as the Messiah was during His trials before the crucifixion; the decisive factor in His condemnation was His claim to be “the Christ” (see Mt 26:62 - 27:54)

Mt 27:11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."

C. The expectations of people

From the New Testament we learn more about the people’s expectations.

They thought the Messiah would perform signs

Jn 7:31 But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, "When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?"

They thought the Messiah would deliver His people, after which He would live and rule forever

Jn 12:34 The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

Some even thought that John the Baptist was the Messiah

Jn 1:20 And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, " I am not the Christ."

Others said that the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem (John 7:42).

Jn 7:42 "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

A woman of Samaria said to Jesus,

Jn 4:25-26 “I know that Messiah is coming.” Jesus replied, “I who speak to you am He.”

The crowds followed Jesus as the Prophet; most expected the Messiah to be a political leader, a king who would defeat the Romans and provide for the physical needs of the Israelites.

Jn 6:14 Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

Jn 6:32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven."

When the crowds understood that His kingdom was a spiritual and not political, they deserted Him.

Jn 6:66 ... many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.

But the apostles remained loyal, saying, “We believe ... you are the Holy One of God” (Jn 6:69).

D. The claims of Jesus

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus never publicly & directly referred to Himself as the Messiah, until the time of the crucifixion (Mt 26:63-64; Mk 14:61-63; Lk 22:67-70).

Privately, Jesus did accept the title of Messiah (Mt 16:16-17).

Yet Jesus constantly avoided being called "Messiah" in public (Mk 8:29).

E. The Messianic secret

He is known as Jesus' "messianic secret." He was the Messiah, but He did not want it known publicly.

The reason for this is that Jesus' kingdom was not political but spiritual (John 18:36).

If Jesus had used the title "Messiah," people would have thought he was a political king. But Jesus understood that the Messiah, God's Anointed One, was to be the Suffering Servant (see Is 52:13 - 53:12).

As the Messiah, Jesus is the divinely appointed king who brought God's kingdom to earth.

Mt 12:28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Lk 11:20)

His way to victory was not by physical force and violence, but through love, humility, and service.

F. The suffering Messiah

To the Jews - the fact that Jesus was a suffering Messiah - a crucified deliverer - was a "stumbling block" to many of the Jews (1 Cor. 1:23).

1 Co 1:23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness,

They saw the cross as a sign of Jesus' weakness, powerlessness, and failure. They rejected the concept of a crucified Messiah.

To the church - But the message of the early church centered around the fact that the crucified and risen Jesus is the Christ.

Ac 5:42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. (Ac 17:3; 18:5).

They proclaimed the "scandalous" gospel of a crucified Messiah as the power and wisdom of God.

1 Co 1:23-24 but we preach Christ crucified, ... Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

John wrote, "Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah)?" (1 Jn 2:22).

By the time of the apostle Paul, "Christ" was in the process of changing from a title to a proper name. The name is found mostly in close association with the name "Jesus," as in:

"Christ Jesus" - being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus (Ro 3:24).

"Jesus Christ" - Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus ... (Ro 1:1).

When the church moved onto Gentile soil, the converts lacked the Jewish background for understanding the title, and it lost much of its significance. Believers became identified with Christ being called "Christians".

Ac 11:26 The disciples were first called Christians [those who belong to and follow the Messiah] in Antioch."

Ac 26:28 Agrippa replied to Paul, "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian."

1 Pt 4:16 but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

V. Understanding Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy

Dan 9:24-27 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. 25 "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

BIBLE BACKGROUND:

Daniel discovers Jeremiah's promise that the captivity will last 70 years (Jer. 25:11–14).

The appointed years are almost complete (538 B.C.). So Daniel pleads with God to act.

The angel Gabriel appears as Daniel is praying, to give God's answer. Daniel is told that a set period of time is determined

Dan 9:24 "for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up [to fulfill] vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy".

This is a unique prophecy in that rather than being indefinite about time, the whole prophecy focuses on time and announces in advance a prophetic time framework.

Some have taken these figures in the literal sense that Daniel clearly intended, interpreting:

"time" as a year,

"week" or "seven" as seven years,

"decree to restore Jerusalem" as that given by Artaxerxes to Ezra in 458 B.C.

The first seven (49 years) takes us to 409 BC - when Nehemiah and Ezra complete the task of walling in and populating the city.

The next group of 62 sevens (434 years) - brings us to 26 AD and the baptism of Jesus (Mt 4; Lk 4) the "anointing of the most holy" (Dan 9:24)

What about the last group of seven years?

Daniel says that "after the sixty-two sevens the anointed one will be cut off and have nothing" (Dan 9:26).

"Cut off" is used in the OT to indicate execution.

Lev 7:20 But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings which belong to the LORD, in his uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from his people.
(see also Ps 37:9; Pr 2:22)

The text implies an indeterminate time gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week.

This ("Cut off and have nothing") happens after "the anointing."

The final seven-year span begins when an evil ruler comes and makes a seven-year treaty with God's people, which he will break at midpoint.

To those who take prophecy in a literal way, the picture of Jesus crucified stands out in bold relief.

So does a fact not known to OT prophecy -
that the Messiah will suffer and die,
and that a great gap of time exists between the first coming of Jesus and his second coming.

When this gap finally closes, the last week of Daniel, like the first sixty-nine, will see prophecy fulfilled as literally and strikingly as Daniel identified the empires of Greece and Rome.

The following references were used in this study:

Every Name of God in the Bible
The Illustrated Bible Handbook
Barnes' Notes
Vines Expository Dictionary
Holman Treasury of Key Bible Words
Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary
Englishman's Concordance